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Requirements for receiving Tax Dispensation on Automobile Number Plates

There are certain criteria for qualifying for tax dispensation on automobile number plates.

January 3rd is the only day for returning 2013 number plates that will not be used.

This is applicable for vehicles that will not be in use during the first quarter of the year – January to March 2013. In order to receive tax dispensation, the plates must be returned on the 3rd of January 2013. Here are the detailed conditions:

1. Must return the 2012 number plates to the Tax Bureau before the beginning of the first quarter. The only day to do this is January 3rd, 2013 along with the payment of Afls.20. If the client shows up after January 3rd to return number plates, the Tax Bureau reserves the right to charge the client for the first quarter and an additional Afls.20.

2. The plates may remain at the bureau for the quarter or the entire 2013 year.

3. Reserve the number for the fiscal year 2013

4. Car Insurance that has been cancelled may not be used as proof that the plates were not used

Returning plates:

Plates must be brought to the cashier; there you will re-

ceive a form titled, "Inleverig nummer-en controleplaat motorrijtuig."

This form can also be downloaded from www.siad.aw. On this form the client explains why the plates will not be in use and why he is returning them. For example: he will be on an extended trip or because the vehicle is not functioning. The form is signed and submitted together with the plates to the cashier.

Plates can be submitted to the main office in Oranjestad or at subsidiary government offices in San Nicolaas, Savaneta, Sta. Cruz or Paradera.

Cancellation of automobile insurance:

At the moment the client receives the plates, cancellation of insurance cannot be given as proof that the plates were not used.

If owner of the vehicle passed away:

In the case of the death of a vehicle owner, a member of his family can return the plates or the spouse can authorize someone to get the numbers. It is also possible for the heirs of the deceased to allow the number to be passed on to someone of their choosing. Each heir will be required to sign a document for the transfer of the number and submit a letter of author-

ization along with the death certificate of the deceased.

Another condition for tax dispensation is that the plates must have remained at the bureau for an entire quarter.

There is no retroactive dispensation. Dispensation does

not cover the cost of the plates.

Numbers may be reserved for the fiscal year 2013 as well as for the owner of the vehicle.

For those wanting to reserve their number and who

does not react at the beginning of the year run the risk of losing their number after February 15, 2013.

Everyone is encouraged to act with prudence to avoid having to pay more taxes than is necessary.

New Year's Eve Party 2012

Monday December 31, 2012

07:00pm - 2:00 am

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 Blackened Mahi Mahi,
 Aged Balsamic Roasted Pork Loin,
 Keshi Yena,
 Pasta Primavera w/ roasted
 vegetables,
 Roasted Garlic Whipped Potato,
 Seasonal Vegetable,
 Truffle Oil

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Yes, there is shopping on January 1!
Start the New Year right with great buys at Effy Jewelers



Diversa earring closed

Those who are not familiar with the smart contemporary designs of master jewelry craftsman Effy Hematian are in for a very pleasant surprise. The cunning deployment of sparkling diamonds of different colors or mixed with brilliant gemstones have resulted in several lines of delicate but striking jewelry that will certainly illicit compliments and envy.

Aruba's exclusive brand store of Effy Jewelers is located in the Jewelry Center in Oranjestad, just next to the Royal Plaza Mall, facing the

harbor. Especially for the holiday, they are offering a unique bargain from their Diversa collection. Diversa

necklaces and earrings are cleverly constructed to be extremely versatile; they unfold to change appearance completely. A strand of hearts in white or yellow gold can also lock together to form a bouquet pendant, allowing it to complement a diversity of necklines.

Effy Jewelers will be open on New Year's Day for those who have not yet had a chance to peruse their elegant inventory. They are offering deep discounts on their Diversa earring collection, which converts from a darling stud-type to a graceful



Diversa earring extended

hanging drop. It comes in both 14K white and yellow gold, inlaid with diamonds, or a combination of blue and white, or black and white diamonds, for a most stylish fashion statement. Normally



Versatile Diversa

\$795, they are only \$495 during this first week of 2013. They also have them in a sterling silver setting for the special price of only \$195.

An acquisition of Diversa jewelry, in effect, is getting two fine pieces for the price of one, offering two completely different looks. They also have other stunning, feminine designs that are a statement of your good taste. Visitors to the store can join their VIP Club to enjoy ex-

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Letter to The Morning News

As I sit on the beach enjoying the holidays on Aruba with my family, as I have done now for more than 30 years, I wish to take a moment to wish all the people on Aruba who have always made our time here so wonderful a very happy, healthy and prosperous 2013.

I and my wife Barb spend our winters on Aruba, having purchased several weeks through the cold months at the Playa Linda Resort. Now we enjoy the island with not only our children, but our grandchildren, and we have watched it change and grow over these decades.

We have seen restaurants, shows and activities come and go, and some are better gone, others we will miss. The same goes for local English newspapers. We now have quite a choice waiting for us every morning, and this is a good thing, we enjoy relaxing on the beach and looking them over.

We were sad to see The News close its doors a few years ago, but were very pleased to see The Morning News being distributed to the hotels. Over the past few years, we have noticed the paper evolve in a way that is most welcome, and we must applaud the distinctly different editorial policy of your paper, it makes our mornings sitting on the beach informative and interesting.

I have to say, when it comes to local news of Aruba, your paper is the ONLY English paper that gives us an in depth view of what is actually going on regarding important local matters such as politics, culture and economy. We, as long term visitors, as do most of our fellow Playa Linda residents, find this vital, as we all have deep emotional and financial investments in the island.

I also wish to compliment you on your original editorial content. I found your "End of 2012-end of the world" commentary highly entertaining and thought-provoking. I hope to continue to see such stimulating articles. You have taken your paper in a direction that we have never seen the English papers in Aruba go before; it the first one we look for every morning. If we miss it at our hotel we will walk over to one of the other hotels to pick one up.

I repeat my wish to all Aruba for a happy and prosperous new year, but I wish to extend it particularly to The Morning News as it is an important part of our morning ritual during the four months we spend here. Keep up the good work!

Ken and Barbara Varga of New Jersey and Aruba

THE MORNING NEWS thanks you Ken for your kind words and wishes you and yours a wonderful time on Aruba and all the best 2013. We believe a newspaper plays a very important part in our daily lives, and it is always gratifying for your readers to demonstrate their appreciation.

KIA's program relies on the cooperation of commerce



Charlene Oduber

According to Charlene Oduber, member of the Management Team of KIA (Aruba's Correctional Institute), the re-socialization pilot project is moving along well and she is convinced that the program will be continued after its evaluation. The cooperation and positive reactions from the business community is very encouraging.

Oduber believes that the participation of commerce in the re-socialization program is extremely important. Businesses contribute not only with the donation of recycled

material but most importantly by giving work to inmates while they are incarcerated. Part of the work is done at KIA or during work-leave of the prisoner. The primary objective of the program is to ensure that every inmate in the program has a job upon leaving the institution. And, this can be accomplished only through the cooperation of the business community. Every effort will be made to ensure that each ex-con remains on the right path after their release.

Oduber indicated that the reaction and behavior of each inmate in the program is excellent and that there is an obvious hunger to learn more, which is admirable. KIA and its management is intent on working hard at bringing about positive change in inmates through this program. And, at the end of the prison sentence they must return to the community as changed, rehabilitated individuals who can positively contribute to our society.



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End of the Year Speech by Aruba's Prime Minister Mike Eman tonight via tv and radio stations



Tonight at 9 p.m. Aruba's prime Minister Mike Eman will be giving his End of the Year Speech to the Aruban community via local tv stations ATV, Tele-Aruba and radio stations. PM Eman will focus on the past and the future of Aruba.

"Our partnership with World Institutes such as Car-

bon War Room, Harvard University and TU Delft partners in the quest leading to a Green Aruba and Green Environment, are putting Aruba on the world map," said Eman

So Aruba is invited to tune in tonight and follow the end of the year speech by Aruba's Prime Minister Eman.

FOCUS Magazine dedicates its DEC. edition to seven persons who excelled in 2012



Focus Magazine recently choose their seven personalities whom excelled in the year 2012. They were chosen based on their personalities, characters, professionalism, style and success. The 7 chosen ones were: Ruvette

Dirksz, Ivo Yanez, Juan Francisco Pardo, Ana Maria Ramirez, Amy Irausquin, Alejandro Muyale y Tyrone de Freitas.

Focus this year also joined the Cas di Glas Foundation to help gather funds for Wit

Gele Kruis. They are proud to announce that they reached the great sum of Afl. 21.000.

This was reached with the help of local artists Belinda de Veer, Alida Martinez, Elvis Lopez y Elisa Lejuez who donated some of their artworks..



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Robbers hit gem-cutting plant in Brazil, take hostages

BRASILIA (AFP) - Robbers in Brazil blasted their way into a gem-cutting plant Sunday, fought a gun battle with police then fled with nine hostages, prompting a massive manhunt, officials said.

Three of the assailants died in the assault in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, a military police official told AFP on condition of anonymity. Authorities have yet to establish contact with the hostage takers, said Sergio Abreu, chief of the military in Rio Grande do Sul. The robbers detonated dynamite to storm into the plant, then ran into police on their way out, the military police official said. Police have recovered part of the loot, but gave no figure for its value.

Nobel medicine laureate Levi-Montalcini dies aged 103

ROME (AFP) - Nobel medicine laureate Rita Levi-Montalcini, a neurologist and developmental biologist, died on Sunday at her home in Rome aged 103.

She was the oldest living Nobel laureate at the time of her death.

Levi-Montalcini shared the prize with colleague Stanley Cohen in 1986 for their ground-breaking discovery of growth factors.

The Nobel committee cited the pair for advancing "our knowledge from a stage when... growth factors were unknown, to a situation today when the role of growth factors in cell proliferation, organ differentiation, and tumour transformation is generally recognised."

Their work has helped un-

derstanding of such disorders as cancer, birth defects and Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases.

Enjoying great affection and respect in Italy, Levi-Montalcini intervened to defend the teaching of evolution in schools when, in 2004, the then education minister, Letizia Moratti, wanted to remove it from the curriculum.

Born into a wealthy Jewish intellectual family in northern Turin in 1909, Levi-Montalcini was the daughter of an engineer and an artist.

In 2001, Italy's then president Carlo Azeglio Ciampi named Levi-Montalcini a senator for life, an honour bestowed on former presidents and prominent figures in social, scientific, artistic or literary fields.

Israel must complete peace deal with Abbas: Peres

JERUSALEM (AFP) - President Shimon Peres on Sunday urged Israel to resume peace talks with the Palestinians, saying their president Mahmud Abbas was a willing partner with whom an agreement could be reached.

Speaking with Israeli diplomats at his Jerusalem residence, Peres said the only way the Jewish state could positively affect the fluctuating reality in the region was "to complete the peace agreement with the Palestinians."

"I know there are different opinions," he said. "This is not a matter of ideology, this is a matter of appraising" the situation.

"I have known Abu Mazen for 30 years, and nobody will change my opinion of him," Peres continued, using Abbas's nom de guerre.

"I know there is criticism of things Abu Mazen said," Peres continued, but "there is currently no other Arab leader who is saying he is in favour of peace, against terror, in favour of a demilitarised state, and of... the Palestinian consensual right of return."

"There is not much time left," he warned.

Talks between the Israel and the Palestinians have been on hold since September 2010, with the Palestinians insisting on a settlement freeze before returning to the negotiating table and the Israelis insisting on no preconditions.

Following last month's historic United Nations vote giving the Palestinians upgraded status in the world body, Israel announced a new spate of settlement building in the West Bank and Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem.

Philippines braces for bloody New Year revelry

MANILA, The Philippines (AFP) - The Philippines braced Sunday for its annual orgy of New Year's Eve merrymaking which every year leaves hundreds maimed by firecrackers or hit by bullets fired in the air by armed revellers.

A total of 171 people have been injured by fireworks

since the Christmas weekend, one was poisoned eating them, while another was wounded by a stray bullet, Assistant Health Secretary Eric Tayag said in an updated toll.

President Benigno Aquino interrupted his holidays to meet emergency services officials about government

preparations for mass casualties, fires and other potential mayhem from the often drunken revelry.

Filipino families celebrate Christmas and New Year by buying and setting off large quantities of fireworks on their own, instead of watching public displays as in some other countries.

The government reported 454 firecracker-related injuries as 2012 was welcomed in. Many of those hurt were children or drunk adults, while some of those accused of indiscriminately firing their guns were soldiers and police officers.

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World leaders face big challenges in 2013

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Barack Obama is back and China has a new leader in Xi Jinping, but world leaders face heavyweight issues in the coming year, from lingering economic crises to bloody tumult in the Middle East:

ECONOMIC CRISES IN THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE

"No 'foreign policy' issue in 2013 will matter as much to global economic, political, and ultimately security conditions as whether the United States and Europe are able to deal with their economic crises," Jessica Mathews, president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, wrote in "Global Ten: Challenges and Opportunities for the president in 2013."

Unless a deal is reached between US President Obama and his Republican opponents by the end of 2012, the United States will plunge off the "fiscal cliff" -- a toxic combination of tax hikes and spending cuts that could trigger another recession in the world's biggest economy.

As for Europe, "the challenge is still to summon sus-

tained economic discipline and political will," explained the American expert. "The euro crisis morphed in 2012 from a life-threatening emergency to a chronic disease that will be with us for years to come," she said, warning countries like France, Italy, Portugal and Spain of the need "to maintain the harsh treatment, avoid setbacks (in France, especially), and continue to inch toward restored growth."

Eurozone GDP is forecast to contract by 0.3 percent next year, but Justin Vaisse, director of research on the United States and Europe at the Brookings Institution, said he believed that the worst of the euro crisis is behind us. "The Americans and the markets have concluded that the euro will not explode, otherwise it would have fallen and there would have been a flight of capital," he told AFP.

The French expert is worried, however, about the effects of the global slowdown on China.

Vaisse envisaged a gloomy scenario in which the euro area "cuts Chinese imports drastically due to a deeper than ex-

pected recession," causing "political, social and geopolitical consequences in China."

"China's outgoing leadership, after years of stellar economic growth, could afford to allow growth to slow and politico-economic problems to accumulate. Xi cannot," noted Mathews.

CHINA, TERRITORIAL DISPUTES WITH NEIGHBORS AND THE US ROLE

As tensions rise in the South China Sea, experts are increasingly fearful of an arms race or even armed conflict in the Asia-Pacific.

Seemingly innocuous territorial disputes over remote archipelagos could flare into military conflicts between China, Japan and South Korea. The United States has a military alliance with Japan but has so far refused to take sides.

China's "neighbors look at the US as the distant balancer, the country that to some degrees balances the military and the political power of China, which would otherwise have an easier time in completely dominating the region," said former US secretary of defense Harold Brown, a coun-

selor for the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).

IRAN

The Iranian nuclear crisis remains "the burning issue" of 2013, with "a reasonably high chance of a serious regional conflagration," Vaisse said. The major powers and Israel suspect Tehran of developing atomic weapons under the guise of a civilian nuclear program, charges denied by the Islamic republic.

As Iran stubbornly continues to enrich its uranium "the logic of the last decade of pursuing sanctions coupled with negotiations has been exhausted," said Vaisse.

Brown, however, said sanc-

tions were having a big effect and called for a real offer to reduce them in return for Tehran abandoning or at least freezing its uranium enrichment.

"I would not rule out the air attack on the Iranian nuclear facilities because they should know that it remains a least a possibility," he added.

SYRIA

Experts envisage that Syrian strongman Bashar al-Assad's Damascus could fall to rebel forces and foresee the beginning of an "international consensus," thanks to a softening of Russia's position.

This should allow in 2013 for "the beginning of what will be a long, difficult political transition," said Mathews.



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Woman accused of NYC subway hate crime murder

NEW YORK (AFP) - A 31-year-old New York woman was scheduled to appear before a judge Sunday after being charged with murder as a hate crime for shoving a Hindu man to his death in front of an oncoming subway train.

Erika Menendez of the Bronx borough was motivated by hatred of Muslims and Hindus, according to the Queens District Attorney's Office.

"I pushed a Muslim off the train tracks because I hate Hindus and Muslims. Ever since 2001 when they put down the twin towers, I've been beating them up," she told police.

The victim, 46-year-old Sunando Sen, was born in India and raised Hindu, a roommate told The New York Times.

Menendez -- who was speaking to herself as she paced along the platform, according to witnesses -- pushed the man as the train was pulling into the station. He apparently had his back to Menendez and did not see her.

Police released surveillance camera video footage via Twitter showing a woman running from the scene.

Sen's death was eerily similar to that of a 58-year-old man killed on December 3 when he was pushed onto the tracks during a fight with a deranged man at a Manhattan subway station. The assailant, later identified as 30-year-old Naeem Davis, has been charged with murder. Davis is homeless.

Several million people use the New York City subway system every day, but incidents of this kind are rare.

Suspected norovirus hits 400 on two Christmas cruises

MIAMI (AFP) - An outbreak of vomiting and diarrhea has sickened more than 400 vacationers and crew members aboard two Christmas-time cruises in the Caribbean, the CDC said.

The CDC said it was still conducting lab tests to determine the pathogen, but it indicated it might be Norovirus, which is highly contagious and typically transmitted from person to person.

Both ships, Cunard's Queen Mary 2 and Princess Cruises' Emerald Princess, reported the outbreak to the Centers for Disease Control, following guidelines that come into play when more than two percent of the passengers and crew are hit.

A similar outbreak earlier in the month hit the P&O Oriana liner on a 10-night Baltic cruise, infecting about 300 of the 1,843 travelers aboard.

Such outbreaks are not uncommon, said Jaret Ames, of the CDC's Vessel Sanitation Program.

"Outbreaks occur throughout the year although there is a seasonal pattern of increased activity during the winter months," he said.

He said in an enclosed area like a ship -- as well as in places like hospitals and nursing homes -- the illness can spread quickly from person to person.

"Those with symptoms many

times circulate among those who are healthy; if they have an event of public vomiting or they don't wash their hands well before touching surfaces, certain illnesses such as norovirus are spread easily from one ill person to one or more well persons, and that illness spreads along that pattern," he explained.

Indian gang-rape victim cremated



NEW DELHI (AFP) - The victim of a gang-rape and murder which triggered an outpouring of grief and revulsion across India was cremated at a private ceremony on Sunday as it emerged she was planning to marry in February. The unidentified 23-year-old, the focus of nationwide protests since she was attacked on a bus in New Delhi two weeks ago, was cremated at a ceremony kept secret by authorities only hours after her body was repatriated from Singapore. The funeral pyre was lit after traumatised relatives and friends said their final prayers at a ceremony in southwestern Delhi, according to mourners who revealed she had been due to wed a boyfriend who was injured in the same attack. After initial treatment in a Delhi hospital following the attack, she was flown to Singapore on Wednesday night where doctors were unable to prevent a multiple organ failure. She was pronounced dead in the early hours of Saturday. Her killing has prompted government promises of better protection for women, and deep soul-searching in a nation where horrifying gang-rapes are commonplace and sexual harassment is routinely dismissed as "Eve-teasing".



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Sci-Tech

Bolivia nationalizes Spanish-owned electrical utilities



LA PAZ (AFP) - Bolivia nationalized electric utilities owned by Spain's Iberdrola Saturday, sending police and troops to enforce the latest expropriation ordered by the populist leader of South America's poorest nation.

President Evo Morales announced a decree targeting Iberdrola-owned utilities Electropaz and Elfeo in the cities of La Paz and Oruro.

In La Paz, soldiers later took control of power plants that until now were run by Iberdrola, while police seized corporate offices.

Iberdrola said it hopes Bolivia will pay "a fair price" for the utilities nationalized by La Paz.

Quoting market sources, the Spanish press estimated Iberdrola's share in the utilities in Bolivia at \$100 million.

It was the latest in a series of such seizures by the outspoken leftist who is a key member of a group of populist South American presidents led by the now-ailing Hugo Chavez of Venezuela.

In May, Morales nationalized a subsidiary of another Spanish power group, electricity distributor Red Elctrica Corporacion.

Since coming to power in January 2006, Bolivia's first president representing the

country's indigenous majority has nationalized the country's oil wealth and smelters, in addition to electric power companies.

This time, Morales said he was acting because Iberdrola charged more for electricity in rural areas than it did in cities, and service was also uneven.

He said Iberdrola would be compensated after an evaluation of its seized assets. This will be done by a private Bolivian company and can take up to six months.

Morales's actions over the years have caused friction with Spain.

Spain said after the Red Elctrica nationalization that it had been given assurances from Bolivia that there would be no more such expropriations.

Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Garcia-Margallo said in August that Spanish companies operating in Bolivia needed legal security for their investments.

The May 2006 energy nationalization affected about a dozen companies, including Spain's Repsol, Petrobras of Brazil, Argentina's PanAmerican and British Petroleum.

Morales has also nationalized refineries and telecommunications companies.



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9 Tips to Help Keep Your Cell Phone Working at Its Best

Want to keep your phone working as well as it can? Here are some tips and warnings:

1. Weak signals kill your battery. Phones use more power when they're trying to access a weak network signal.
2. Smart phones need a fresh (re)start. (every one or two days to purge memory reserved by programs no longer running and to correct various other glitches that can hinder performance.)
3. Smart phones get slower with age.
4. Video kills your data allowance.
5. Skip screen protectors. Many of today's touch screens already come with a protective layer of Gorilla Glass or other hardened material that make scratching them nearly impossible.

Some screen protectors reduce glare, but they can also make your display less responsive and harder to see in other ways. And screen protectors, even when properly installed, often develop unsightly air bubbles and annoying scratches of their own.

6. A weak case for cases. Today's smart-phone bodies often include Kevlar, carbon fiber, or other hardened materials that are quite tough. Af-

termarket cases may offer a bit of extra protection, but they'll often hinder access or slow the responsiveness of the phone's screen, buttons, and ports that you access frequently.

7. Phone camera zoom lenses really aren't.

8. Think twice about insurance and extended warranties.

9. Prepaid carriers are great place for smart phones.



RUSSIAN FEDERATION (AFP) - A couple embrace in a park with snowy trees seen around, with the air temperature at about minus 8 degrees Celsius (17.6 degrees Fahrenheit), in Russia's southern city of Stavropol. Russia endures an abnormally cold winter, the most severe in more than 70 years, according to local media.

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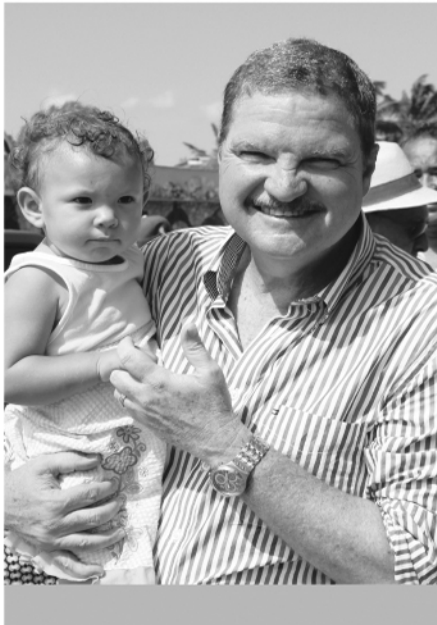
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Finance

German exporters eye new record trade in 2013

BERLIN (AFP) - Germany, one of the world's top exporters, should post a new record for exports next year, driven by demand from Asia, the head of the BGA federation of exporters and wholesalers said on Sunday.

"We expect an increase of up to five percent in exports to 1.158 trillion euros (\$1.53 trillion) in 2013 and a 5.5-percent rise in imports to 980 billion euros," said BGA chief Anton Boerner in a new year's message.

Despite the eurozone crisis, Germany achieved record exports in 2012, added Boerner, amounting to 1.103 trillion euros, and a trade surplus of 174 billion euros.

Boerner said the bullish projection was based on "stability and no new volatility on the financial markets. Europe, the United States and China have a lot of homework to do in the new year in this respect," he said.

He said order books for next year were full "especially from the growth markets in Asia" and added that the low value of the euro on the currency markets was helping trade with the United States and Japan.

However, he cautioned that "the European debt crisis will be with us for a long time yet" and said he was especially concerned about what he said were "increasingly protectionist trends in several eastern European countries."

Drama in Washington as fiscal cliff looms

continued from page 1

Democratic President Barack Obama, eyeing a short-term political victory, accused Republicans of causing the mess, saying they had refused to move on what he said were genuine offers of compromise from Democrats.

Obama said it had been "very hard" for top Republican leaders to accept that "taxes on the wealthiest Americans should go up a little bit, as part of an overall deficit reduction package."

But Republicans were irked by Obama's tone and matched his accusations. The ugly mood could either hint that hopes for a consensus are fading or be the kind of political-base pleasing rhetoric that sometimes heralds a compromise.

The president won re-election partly on a platform of raising taxes on the rich, but Republicans who run the House of Representatives oppose tax hikes as a point of principle and claim Obama is addicted to runaway spending.

If no deal is reached, a package of tax cuts for all Americans that was first passed by former president George W. Bush will expire on January 1.

All American workers will see their own paycheck hit and the broader economy will be hit by massive automatic spending cuts across the gov-



ernment.

Experts expect the US economy could slide into recession if the standoff is prolonged, in a scenario that could cause turmoil in stock markets and hit prospects for global growth in 2013.

Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, speaking as his party bosses huddled with senior Democrats in search of a deal, predicted a short-term agreement would emerge, but would only postpone the budget battle by a few months.

For now, the action is confined to the Senate, as Democratic leader Harry Reid and his Republican counterpart Mitch McConnell try to reach a deal that would pass their chamber and then move to the House of Representatives.

Such is the power of the conservative dominated House, it is unclear if any deal

that wins Obama's stamp of approval could pass into law.

Both the House and the Senate were due back in session Sunday, for what could be a dramatic 36 hours up to the turn of the year.

If leaders fail to find an agreement, Obama has demanded a vote on his fallback plan that would preserve lower tax rates for families on less than \$250,000 a year and extend unemployment insurance for two million people.

Should Republicans block that attempt, they would face being lambasted by angry voters who see their taxes shoot up -- an unenviable political plight.

Reid and McConnell were not expected to reveal their hands until later on Sunday, but some reports said they were working on a deal to put the higher taxes threshold at

around \$400,000 a year.

It is a measure of the dysfunction in Washington, where the political center has disappeared and the two parties share power, that the fiscal cliff was set up by both sides precisely in order to avoid such a last-minute frenzy.

The combined \$500 billion whack from tax hikes and cuts to defense and social programs was supposed to be so punishing that it would force the hands of both sides to make long-term compromises on tax and spending.

But the threat has failed, and any deal that emerges now will simply set up new rows over the tax code and reform of social programs that are helping to inflate US government debt, as the annual deficit runs at over \$1 trillion.

Republicans are already promising to use Obama's request to raise the \$16 trillion ceiling on government borrowing, due to be hit by Monday, over the next few months to demand concessions from the president on spending.

The prolonged row is casting a shadow over Obama's plans to name his second-term cabinet, reframe his political agenda and to move on key priority issues like immigration reform and gun control.

SATURDAY'S Crossword Answer

ADIOS	BALI	SHEET
IRAN	AGED	CERTS
SEMI	BENE	ALINE
CAPTAIN	AMERICA	
RET	REX	
MERGES	BEAD	OPA
ALIEN	SALT	OPEN
CAPTAIN	SMOLLETT	
ATES	VITO	AERIE
WEN	CAPE	STOATS
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Donors pledge \$550mn for UN refugee work in 2013



GENEVA (AFP) - The UN refugee agency said Tuesday it had received government pledges totalling \$550 million (423 million euros) for its efforts next year to help millions of displaced people worldwide.

Government donors had also promised an additional \$169 million for UNHCR's work in 2014 and beyond, the agency said.

The UNHCR described the pledges as "heartening", pointing out that at a similar pledging session towards its 2012 budget, donors only coughed up \$482 million.

The amount promised Tuesday meanwhile only makes up a portion of UNHCR's esti-

mated 2013 budget of \$3.92 billion, but the agency said the early pledges were good indicators of how much it would have to work with next year.

"New humanitarian crises over the past months have created hundreds of thousands more refugees and internally displaced people," UN High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres said in a statement.

In the past year and a half, the world has seen several simultaneous new conflicts that have created a surge in new refugees from countries like Syria, Mali and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The UNHCR for instance announced earlier Tuesday that the number of Syrian refugees registered in neighbouring countries and North Africa had swelled to over a half million people.

"At the same time ... protracted displacement situations such as that in Afghanistan and Somalia have not gone away," the agency pointed out.

UNHCR said that of the 42.5 million people forcibly displaced as of the end of 2011, it had helped 25.9 million.



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BRAZIL (AFP) - People enjoy Ipanema beach in Rio de Janeiro on Dec. 27, 2012. Rio de Janeiro reported a heat record of 109.7 degrees Fahrenheit, the highest temperature since 1915, according to the National Institute of Meteorology.

Eat like a local at The Queen's restaurant at Palm Beach Plaza



Keshi Yena with plantains, vegetables and pica

An elegant décor with a breezy terrace overlooking Palm Beach welcomes guests to Varella Innocencia's very popular restaurant showcasing authentic local cuisine:

The Queen's.

They may have moved from Oranjestad to hipper new digs in Palm Beach Plaza, but the food and prices are strictly native, which is what first won this charming eatery their

loyal clientele. Varella's mom, Luisa, is still in the kitchen, conjuring up the delicious dishes that have been in her family for generations, acknowledged on the menu with items such as "Carni Stoba di Mamachi"—"Grandma's Beef Stew," and their Arawak Steak, along with local delicacies like Keshi Yena —"Full Cheese." This is a tasty, filling stew of chicken, with other in-

gredients that are handy that day, all incased in a thick skin of melted Gouda. It was very satisfying and particularly memorable paired with The Queen's garlic bread and very special Pica, a mix of chopped onions and the famous local hot pepper, Madame Janette. Not overly spicy, it lends that perfect bit of tang to this deliciously picturesque meal.

One of the distinctions of Aruban cuisine is incorporating unique indigenous ingredients such as in Wild Cucumber Stew and a particular light fish chowder accompanied by the local specialties pan bati (corn meal pancake) and funchi (the local version of polenta.)

Seafood main courses range from \$14 for Catch of the Day Aruban Style to \$18 for shrimp and \$20 for a mixed seafood platter with shrimp, fish, squid, scallops and mussels. Meat dishes such as BBQ Chicken and Ribs or



Varella, Luisa and the next generation of chef

Grilled Tenderloin range from \$12 to \$16, each including a choice of 2 side dishes; all quite yummy and bargain-priced to boot!

The Queen's is located on the second level of Palm Beach Plaza, tucked into a cozy corner at the front of the mall. If you have a mind to try the real deal in Aruban food, without a doubt, this is the

way to truly eat like a local. They are open from 11:00 AM to 11:00 PM, daily, offering indoor and outdoor dining. Aside from an extensive menu they also have daily specials made from whatever is in season and Mama Luisa is in the mood to prepare, so don't forget to ask about what isn't on the menu!

Gold Coast Aruba: This is the time to invest



Management of Gold Coast Aruba, the island's newest and most innovative gated community, reports that sales have been very good and encouraging as the global economy recovers and people looking to purchase vacation homes have found that Gold Coast is an outstanding investment value. Director of Sales, Fito Croes has noticed a surprising percentage of owners in reality do not spend a great amount of time personally to use the villas or town homes they purchase, but are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their 'home away from home' in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," he remarked, "but I am gratified by how many are buying because they felt secure with real estate investment on

Aruba. They really study the history and economy of the island and are impressed with the political stability and continually increasing value of prime locations. Gold Coast is in the heart of Malmok, considered Aruba's most exclusive community where the value of properties has only increased over time. It is only minutes to the best beaches and all the action, and yet offers a quiet and secluded getaway; we are very pleased by the response to our concept."

Fito, with his sister Mayrin and brother Rudy operate Cas Bon, which has been constructing homes and building developments for nearly twenty years. "Gold Coast Aruba is the jewel in our crown," observes Fito. "We were very excited about this project and the scope of actual and planned facilities and amenities. We have spoken to countless island visitors to find out what they would really

want in a permanent residence on Aruba, and took from there."

Input from frequent vacationers who have dreamed of their own home in Aruba contributed to the realization of Gold Coast Aruba which when complete will be a community of 260 town homes, villas and condominiums with a stunning clubhouse complemented by two additional community pool areas. The Clubhouse is about to start construction and will offer to the community homeowners and visitors 2

advantage of the on site management's rental services program. There is always a great demand for Aruba and facilities such as those at Gold Coast, make it easy for some owners to see a valuable return on their investment.

The design of the residences and public areas is open, airy and spacious, taking full advantage of the island environment, with quality construction and finishing available. Partnering with two of Aruba's top providers of kitchens and bathrooms en-



tennis courts, full service spa and fitness center as well as a stunning pool area and is expected to be complete by early 2013. It will also house a restaurant and mini-market.

Owners who purchased upon the groundbreaking only a few short years ago, are already enjoying a nearly 50% appreciation on their investment, particularly those taking

ables developers to offer custom options allowing buyers to individualize their homes. An elegant and chic furniture package is available or island designers will assist owners in finishing the décor to their specific tastes.

There are many aspects to purchasing property; not the least is the future value of the

investment. To further enhance this, Gold Coast management have inaugurated a number of in-house services and have recently become affiliated Interval International, the world's largest network of vacation ownership properties which provides an unlimited international pool of investors to tap for ownership and rental prospects. Property exchange for a vacation in another destination is also available through the Interval International affiliation. Gold Coast's own rental services have also proven highly successful in assisting owners in renting their villas; 24-hour security and maintenance services also tip the scales when it is time to make a decision. Aside from all this, housekeeping, child care, catering services, car rental through its partnership with AVIS car rental are also available as well as pre-shopping services so cupboards and refrigerators are stocked upon arrival, which can also be arranged through their property management department. Personnel are also available to assist in arranging restaurant reservations and island activities.

Visit their website: www.goldcoastaruba.com for more details and availability or call 586-2200 to arrange a personal tour.



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SPORTS

Football: Lampard double propels Chelsea up to third

LONDON (AFP) - Frank Lampard provided a timely reminder of his value to Chelsea by scoring twice as his side reclaimed third place in the Premier League by coming from behind to win 2-1 at Everton

on Sunday.

The 34-year-old England midfielder, whose contract expires at the end of the season, cancelled out Steven Pienaar's opener shortly before half-time and then claimed the winner with 18 minutes remaining at Goodison Park.

Victory moved Rafael Benitez's side above Tottenham Hotspur into third place, four points behind second-place Manchester City and with a game in hand, while Everton remain sixth, three points below the top four.

"It was very hard. This is always one of the most difficult games of the season," said Lampard. "We got a (2-0) tanking here last year and we had to stand up for ourselves. We went 1-0 down but after half an hour, we started getting into the game.

Defeat prevented Everton from asserting their Champions League credentials, but they had started the game in menacing fashion and took the lead after just 63 seconds.

Victor Anichebe met stand-in right-back Phil Jagielka's floated cross with a header that came back off the left-hand post and Pienaar charged in to spear the ball past Petr Cech, who was making his 400th Chelsea appearance.

Nikica Jelavic then hit the same portion of woodwork with a free-kick, before Lampard equalised in the 42nd minute when he met Ramires' cross with a precisely directed downward header.

Chelsea lost Cech to an apparent ankle injury at half-time and his replacement, Ross Turnbull, was beaten by a Jelavic header in the 69th minute, only for the crossbar to come to his rescue.

The winning goal arrived three minutes later, Lampard nudging the ball into the roof of the net after Tim Howard saved from Juan Mata to give the Blues a fourth consecutive league win.

Everton's best chance of an equaliser fell to Jelavic in injury time, but the Croatian striker got his legs in a tangle and could not make meaningful contact with Leighton Baines' cross.

Everton coach David Moyes confronted referee Howard Webb at the final whistle but later revealed that he had said sorry for his behaviour.

There is a full programme of Premier League games on New Year's Day and January 2, with leaders Manchester United visiting Wigan Athletic and second-place Manchester City hosting Stoke City.



OBERSTDORF, Germany (AFP) - Norway's 2007 champion Anders Jacobsen won Sunday's opening Four Hills event of the season at Oberstdorf. Jacobsen produced jumps of 138 and 139m for a total of 308.6 points to edge out Austrian titleholder Gregor Schlierenzauer, who pulled out leaps of 134.5 and 138.5m for 297 points. Germany's Severin Freund was third after his efforts of 138.5 and 135.5m gave him 290.8 points. Tuesday sees the next Four Hills jump at Garmisch-Partenkirchen, before a January 4 competition at Innsbruck and then the final event of the quartet at Bischofshofen two days later.



NEW ORLEANS (AFP) - The New Orleans Saints and head coach Sean Payton have agreed terms on a multi-year contract extension, the NFL team said Saturday. Payton hasn't coached this season as he served a one-year suspension for his role in the so-called bounty scandal, in which the NFL said Saints players were rewarded monetarily for injuring opposing players. His contract was due to expire after the current season ends on Sunday. In his six seasons guiding the Saints, the team amassed a record of 62-34 with four playoff appearances and a Super Bowl triumph. This season the Saints have been a disappointing 7-8 under interim coaches Joe Vitt and Aaron Kromer.




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NBA: Bucks burn Heat despite Wade's return, Timberwolves' Roy still seeking NBA return

MILWAUKEE (AFP) - Brandon Jennings scored 25 points and Cameroon's Luc Richard Mbah a Moute added 19 for Milwaukee Saturday in a 104-85 victory over reigning NBA champions the Miami Heat.

Jennings added seven assists and four steals, while Mbah a Moute grabbed seven rebounds for a Bucks team that has won three of their last four games.

Mike Dunleavy added 18 points, nine rebounds and six assists for Milwaukee, while Larry Sanders scored 16

points and grabbed 11 rebounds.

The defeat marked just the second time this season the Heat have dropped back-to-back games.

On Friday, the NBA champions fell 109-99 in front of a sell-out crowd in Detroit.

Wade missed that game, serving a one-game suspension for a kick that caught Charlotte guard Ramon Sessions in the groin earlier in the week.

Prior to the game Wade said he just wanted to "move on" in the wake of the suspension. He scored 24 points with six rebounds, while teammate LeBron James led all scorers with 26 points.

James added seven assists and six rebounds, and Chris Bosh contributed 12 points and 16 rebounds, but it wasn't enough.

While the Minnesota Tim-



Larry Sanders #8 of the Milwaukee Bucks shoots against LeBron James #6 of the Miami Heat during the game on Saturday.

berwolves guard Brandon Roy said Saturday he's determined to pursue his return to the NBA, despite a setback in his recovery from knee surgery.

"Last week while practicing, I suffered a setback in my recovery. I've felt better since the recent surgery, but I am not all the way better," Roy said in a statement.

"I have decided to explore additional treatment options and an extensive rehabilitation plan. My goal has been, and continues to be, to return to the basketball court as healthy as possible in order to help our team."

Roy, the NBA's rookie of the year in 2007, has long been plagued by knee troubles.

He retired briefly following the 2010-11 season and in November underwent his seventh surgery to treat chronic knee pain.

Reports surfaced Saturday that he was again contemplating retirement, but Roy said he hasn't given up on his NBA dream, even though he has played just five games this season.

In 326 career games with Portland and Minnesota, Roy has averaged 18.8 points and 4.7 assists.

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Tennis: Djokovic wins Abu Dhabi tournament

ABU DHABI (AFP) - Novak Djokovic got his season off to a perfect start by defeating Nicolas Almagro 6-7 (4/7), 6-3, 6-4 on Saturday in the final of the Mubadala World Tennis Championship exhibition tournament.

Djokovic had looked in impressive early season form in Friday's semi-finals, destroying world No.5 David Ferrer in straight sets, while Almagro, a late replacement for the injured Rafael Nadal, was taken all the way by Janko Tipsarevic.

But it was the Spaniard who edged a close first set 7/4 on a tiebreaker, with Djokovic, the winner last year, looking listless at times.

The world No.1 put that setback quickly behind him as he broke Almagro to start the second set, but he failed to turn that into a 2-0 lead as Almagro broke back to level in the next game.

A double-fault from the Spaniard though saw the Serb take back the advantage and this time he held firm to level the set scores.

The decider went with serve until the 10th game when Almagro served up three straight unforced errors to hand Djokovic the win.

The match for third place played earlier was won by Spain's Ferrer as he defeated Tipsarevic of Serbia 7-6 (7/4), 6-2.

All four players will head out for Australia to complete their preparations for the Australian Open which gets under way in Melbourne on January 14 where Djokovic will be the defending champion.



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Tennis: Venus Williams leads US to victory over S. Africa

PERTH (AFP) - American tennis star Venus Williams gave her comeback hopes a boost with a win at the Hopman Cup in Perth on Sunday, and said she still believed she could be a force in the Grand Slams.

The former world number one beat Chanelle Scheepers in three sets to help the United States post a 2-1 win over South Africa in their Group B tie at the mixed teams tournament.

Williams, playing for the first time since October and just 24 hours after arriving in Australia, made a slow start against the 60th-ranked Scheepers but steadied to win

4-6, 6-2, 6-3.

The seven-time Grand Slam singles winner has climbed the rankings this year as she recovered from a major setback due to illness in 2011.

Williams has not won a Grand Slam singles title since her 2008 success at Wimbledon. She slipped to 134th in the rankings last year after suffering from Sjogren's Syndrome, a systemic autoimmune disease.

However, the 32-year-old has enjoyed much better fortunes this year.

She won her first singles title since 2010 in Luxem-



bourg, teamed with sister Serena to win gold in the doubles at the London Olympics and finished the season ranked 24th in the world.

Speaking after hitting 44 winners in disposing of Scheepers, Williams said this year was a great platform for the coming 12 months.

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